

, before whose thunderbolt the numerous cities, or hamlets, of the *Dasyus* were swept away.

We have no particular intimation of the political condition of the Hindus, except the specification of a number of names of princes, many of which are peculiar to the *Veda*, and differ from those of the heroic poems and *Purāṇas*. A few are identical; but the nomenclature evidently belongs to a period anterior to the construction of the dynasties of the Sun and Moon, no allusion to which, thus far, occurs. The princes named are, sometimes, described as in hostility with each other; and the condition of the provinces of India occupied by the Hindus was, no doubt, the same which it continued to be until the Mohammedan conquest,—parcelled out amongst insignificant principalities, under petty and contending princes.

Upon a subject of primary importance in the history of Hindu society, the distinctions of caste, the language of the *Suktas*—of the first *Asaita*, at least,—is by no means explicit, "Whenever collectively alluded to, mankind are said to be distinguished into five sorts, or classes, or, literally, five men, or beings

*(pancha kshitayah)*. The commentator explains this term to denote the four castes, *Brdhmana*, *Kstmttriya*, *VaiSya*, and *Sudra*, and the barbarian, or *Nishdda*: but SAYANA, of course, expresses the received impressions of his own age. We do not meet with the denominations *Kshattriya* or *Sudra* in any text of the first book, nor with that -of *Vaisycc*; for *Vis*, which, does occur^ is, there, a synonym of man in general. *Brdhmana* is met with, but in what sense is questionable. In the